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Playing Well With Others

OSBA Capital Conference
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Linda N. Reid – South Euclid-Lyndhurst School District
Eric J. Johnson – Walter | Haverfield LLP
Stephen L. Byron – Walter | Haverfield LLP

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Agenda

- Identifying the "Interaction" Issues
- Best Practices for Fostering a Productive Relationship
- Conflict Mitigation and Resolution

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The Good, the Bad and the Ugly...



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The Good ...

"City, School Officials Outline Focus of Joint Partnership"

"City, School Officials Meet to Discuss Anti-Gang, Drug Prevention Initiatives"

"Improved Efficiency, Cost-Cutting to be Focus of School, City Summit"

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The Bad ...

- *"City and Schools Fight Over Crossing Guards"*
- *"School, City at Odds Over Proposed Land Use"*

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...and the Ugly

- *"Mayor Says School Doesn't Need New Levy"*
- *"Council Disagrees With School Consolidation Plan"*

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Traditional Areas of Overlap

- Levy issues and support (or lack thereof)
- Labor disputes
- Safety (and criminal) issues
- Crossing guards
- Transportation issues
- Building projects – construction/renovation

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Traditional Areas of Overlap

- Civil service interaction
- Recreation – joint programs or otherwise
- Facilities use issues
- Land/property issues (use, swap, etc.)
- Zoning considerations
- Adult education programs

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"Interaction" Areas on the Rise

- Shared services and shared equipment;
"mutual aid" agreements
- School resource officers and police role
 - Access to buildings/surveillance/students in school
 - Access to records/information/interrogation

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"Interaction" Areas on the Rise

- Community outreach programs
 - Childcare, extended learning programs
 - Homework centers at City libraries
 - Community access through city-school partnerships (family-focus, senior citizens)
 - Health-based initiatives and fitness/wellness centers
 - School-based healthcare sites

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"Interaction" Areas on the Rise

- Property issues, including sale/transfer to City
- Economic development programs (see next slide)

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Economic Development Issues

- Several tax abatement schemes require agreement of the school districts for certain levels of abatement (e.g., CRA abatements in commercial/industrial projects over 50%)
- TIFs, CRAs, and Enterprise Zones require an income tax sharing agreement between the municipality and schools for projects that produce \$1M in new payroll
- If no agreement is reached, the statute requires a 50/50 split of the income tax revenue

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Best Practices for a Productive Relationship

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Ways to Improve the Relationship

- Just like every other relationship, you need to work on it on a regular basis --- ***not just when you need something***
- Communication and information-sharing is critical

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Ways to Improve the Relationship

- From a Superintendent's Perspective ...
- Specific strategies that a district can use to build and support a productive relationship with its municipal partner(s)

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Specific Steps to Take ...

- Establish a relationship with city officials from day one.
 - This includes mayor, city council, finance director, service director, recreation director, etc.
- Establish regular meetings with mayor/s ... *yes, even when there is not an issue present*
- Get to know your city council people.
 - Many times there are competing interests within a city council. Know where people stand on certain issues.

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Specific Steps to Take ...

- Be accessible to city officials
- Be responsive to city council requests and needs
 - Note: this doesn't mean you have to give them everything they want....work with them. Remember they are serving people who vote for them ... *and who choose whether they will support the schools!*

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Specific Steps to Take ...

- Ongoing Communication is huge
- Bring city officials in early on major projects and changes happening in the district
- Don't get caught up in "my way" or "their way"
- Timely responses help prevent miscommunication and lack of trust

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Specific Steps to Take ...

- Major District initiatives or projects
 - Consider whether it is wise to recruit city officials into the mix at the outset for support

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Mitigating and Resolving Conflicts When They Arise

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How Things Go Wrong ...

- Competing interests
- Power Struggle (Board of Education vs. City Council, Mayor vs. Superintendent)
- Lopsided outcomes

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How Things Go Wrong ...

- Working in isolation
- Poor Communication

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How Things Go Wrong ...


- The lawyers ruin everything ...
– *Note: this slide inserted at demand of the non-lawyer speaker and does not necessarily reflect the views of all participants.*

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION:



1. Identify Nature of Conflict
2. Look at the issue from the mission of the "other side"
3. Identify "Common Ground"
4. Propose mutually acceptable result

CONFLICT
Resolution





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COMPARE MISSIONS

<u>Schools</u>	<u>Municipalities</u>
1. <u>Mission:</u> Provide educational opportunities to community	1. <u>Mission:</u> Prevent and resolve disputes; provide municipal services
	

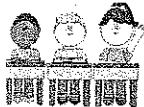

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COMPARE MEANS

<u>Schools</u>	<u>Municipalities</u>
2. <u>Means:</u> Taxes, Grants, Donations	2. <u>Means:</u> Taxes, Grants, Donations
	

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Issues to be addressed:



<u>Schools</u>	<u>Municipalities</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Constituents (students and parents)	<input type="checkbox"/> Constituents (voters and non-voters)
	

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Issues to be addressed:

Schools
 Employees (teachers and non-teachers)

Municipalities
 Employees (law enforcement and non-law enforcement)





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Issues to be addressed:

Schools
 Facilities (buildings and grounds)

Municipalities
 Facilities (roads and buildings)





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Issues to be addressed:

Schools
 Transportation



Municipalities
 Transportation



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Issues to be addressed:

<u>Schools</u>	<u>Municipalities</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintaining order in schools	<input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement (land use, noise, traffic)

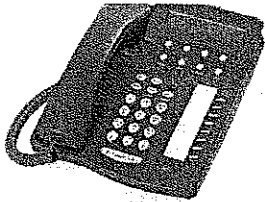


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Don't just show up "every 5 years"



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SUCCESS!!
The Mayor's Phone Doesn't Ring.

